



CROUGHTON NEWS

May 2020

MERYL'S PLANT STALL

My charity plant stall has been very busy in the last few weeks with lots of people visiting it (properly distanced) on their daily one hour walks and we've already raised just over £600 so far this year, which is shared equally between Croughton Reading Room & Brackley Hogwatch. Thank you so much!

It costs approx. £100 to look after just one hedgehog over the winter period so it's been great to keep the plant stall going with help from my hubby Stephen and my friend Becky who lives opposite.

There are lots of plants available and I am adding new plants as often as I can. The geraniums should be ready very soon so look out for them on my stall! I have cucumber plants in the greenhouse that are ready, please contact me if you'd like some and a few bush marrow plants that are hardening off and will be ready soon. I've had germination problems and slow growth with pepper, tomato & courgette seeds due to the unusual heat so they will be delayed. I will let you know when they are available.

Meryl - 16 Mill Lane,
01869 819525
07766 495059



Footpath report 2018/19

The footpaths around the village are well posted and clearly marked; thank you to all the landowners for this.

I have changed signs if they have lost their colour.

The bridge across the ford at the mill AF9/AF13 can be slippery in the wet and wintery weather, I have sought advice on this but unfortunately we cannot secure chicken wire across this as it poses another problem in that the water turns to ice and we still have the same issue.

I have cut back the nettles along AF11 between the recreation park and the houses and AF5 the path behind the school to the cemetery.

A new stile has been installed at the AF7 roadside near Pimlico Farm. The bridle path AF4 is still inaccessible through the little gate but the big gate is accessible.

I have not recently walked the length of AF6, AF5 and AK8. If anyone walking these finds a problem please contact me through the clerk.

Happy walking our village paths. Chris Fox

Coronavirus Volunteer Group

There are currently 20+ volunteers operating across Croughton village should anyone need any assistance during self isolation.

Each volunteer looks after the residents in the street that they live in (two volunteers per street). Leaflets have been dropped to every household in the village with the contact details; information can also be found outside the Co-op and in the bus shelter.

The volunteer group is being organised via the Croughton Chat Facebook Group. Or for more details, please contact Lotty Dollman, 07804 905747.

Preston Bissett Nurseries - Croughton Group Garden Orders.

I am still happy to co-ordinate the village group garden orders to Preston Bissett Nurseries. Please read the information below as the procedure has altered slightly in an effort to make it easier for me to manage!

Preston Bissett Nurseries are offering a FREE delivery service on a vast range of garden items - seeds, composts & plants etc. when we place a collective order from the village, which is delivered to my address for distribution within the village.

If you wish to place an order to Preston Bissett Nurseries for garden items please email ME with your order details and your telephone number. My email address is: meryltrimmer@gmail.com

I will send an email to Preston Bissett every evening, with all the orders I've received that day.

Preston Bissett will ring you when they are processing your order for delivery to my address, please let me know when they've contacted you as this will make it much easier for me to sort the orders out when they arrive here.

I will be in touch, as soon as the orders arrive, to arrange collection, or if you are vulnerable/self-isolating my hubby can deliver it to you.

Please spread the word, especially to those who do not use the Internet. If you know someone who wishes to place an order but doesn't use the Internet please ask them to ring me so I can organise it for them. Meryl - 16 Mill Lane Tel. 8196525 or 07766 495059 Thank You.

You can check available stock on their website: <http://prestonbissettnurseriesandcountryshop.blogspot.com/search/label/All%20Availability%20Lists>

Croughton Village Website

For all information on events, parish council meetings and general information etc.

www.croughtonparishcouncil.org.uk

Parish Council Meeting held on 6th April 2020

Virtual Meetings: The introduction in March of Government rules on gatherings, meetings and, to a certain extent, social distancing, has brought a change in the way local councils are able to transact their business. On 4th April 2020 The Local Authorities (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority Meetings) (England) Regulations 2020 came into force with the provision to permit all Council meetings to be held virtually, until the date of the local elections on 6th May 2021.

Accordingly, for the first time ever the Ordinary monthly meeting of the Parish Council held on 6th April was conducted via Zoom, an online platform. These free sessions are time limited which calls for disciplined focus on the Agenda. Not all members were familiar with the technology but in general the view was that the meeting had been successful and worth repeating. The Council will continue to hold its monthly meetings via Zoom and review the need to subscribe to an unlimited service.

Public Participation: It is possible to link in members of the public who wish to speak to specific items on the Agenda. Please contact the Clerk to request further information about accessing the meeting - clerk@croughtonparishcouncil.org.uk

Emergency Planning during the Coronavirus Pandemic:

The Council discussed various initiatives, amongst these the impressive local response. Councillors agreed that the community volunteers, led by co-ordinator Lotty Dollman were doing an outstanding job in assisting not only self-isolating residents with telephone or practical support, but also any resident needing supplies and meals on wheels. The Parish Council's Emergency Response Plan and Parish Council services were also reviewed.

Casual Vacancies: Two vacancies have been created on the Parish Council as a result of the resignations of Cllr Jean Coles, whose dedicated service on the Parish Council and Poor's Allotment Trust spans two centuries, and former Chairman, Cllr Penny Forbes, whose service since 2012 also included 5 years as Trustee/Treasurer of the Poor's Allotment Trust. If you are 18 years of age and over and would be interested in serving on the Parish Council until the local elections on 6th May 2021, please contact the Clerk or the Chairman for information.

Email: clerk@croughtonparishcouncil.org.uk or chairman@croughtonparishcouncil.org.uk

Parish Council Meetings are held every month on the second Monday. The next meeting are on **8th June 2020**, 13th July 2020, 10th August 2020. Meetings commence at 7.30 p.m.

Agendas are published a few days in advance on the website www.croughtonparishcouncil.org.uk

Community Resilience Service

The County Council is working with district councils to co-ordinate a community response, the Community Resilience Service, and has launched a helpline for anyone in the county needing help, although if you are receiving support locally for your needs, please continue to rely on that local support.

The number is 0300 126 1000 (option 5) (for people needing help with getting food, medication or other important things but who have no local support) or email nccg.communityresilience.covid19@nhs.net or customerservices@northamptonshire.gov.uk to ask for help.

Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) in Northamptonshire

Unitary Authorities. Visit www.futurenorthantswest.org or www.futurenorthantsnorth.org

Croughton is within the area served by West Northamptonshire Council.

On 8th May 2020 the two Shadow Councils will be set up.

Membership of the Shadow West Northamptonshire Council (134 members) will comprise a combination of councillors from existing authorities - South Northamptonshire and Daventry District Councils, Northampton Borough Council and Northampton County Council.

The Leader of the Shadow West Northamptonshire Authority will be Cllr Ian McCord of SNC. Existing councillors will sit on the shadow authority until 1st April 2021. Elections will take place on 6th May 2021.

Mobile Solar Powered Vehicle Activated Sign

The Parish Council has identified four lamp columns to be used at the outset and to which the VAS and solar panel will be bracketed. These are:

- Lamp Column 30 in Portway, opposite Portway Drive
- Lamp Column 51 in High Street, at chicane by the School
- Lamp column 57 in Brackley Road, by Townend Close
- Lamp Column 54 at Blenheim, adjacent to the stream.

The next Parish Council may decide that a second VAS, not necessarily solar powered, sited at other locations would be beneficial for traffic calming. Street signs could be used for battery powered VAS devices only; solar powered ones would necessitate the installation of new free-standing posts, in places where there are no suitable lamp columns.

Lamp Columns identified as suitable locations for consideration in the future are:

- Lamp Column 14 at Blenheim, adjacent to house No. 2, Blenheim Croft
- Lamp Column 27 to the front of house No. 11, Brackley Road.

Street signs and/or new posts identified as suitable locations for consideration in the future are:

- Roundabout warning sign and/or new post adjacent to house No. 2 Portway
- School warning sign and/or new post near to build out adjacent to Blackbird PH
- Road narrows sign and/or new post adjacent to house No. 15 Park End.

Sites identified as suitable locations for consideration in the future requiring the installation of new posts are:

- Verge opposite house No. 19 Brackley Road
- Verge opposite house No. 11 Brackley Road
- Near to priority bollard adjacent to The Old Dairy, 46 High Street
- Footway in vicinity of house No. 61 High Street.

If you have any comments to make on any of these locations please convey them to the Clerk by 31st May 2020.

Email clerk@croughtonparishcouncil.org.uk

Thank you.

Brackley Community Hospital 2020 Trust

**Message from Caryl Billingham MBE
Chairman, Brackley Community Hospital 2020 Trust
(registered number 1185445).**

£123,000+ or 75% of the original Fund Raising Target of £165,000 has already been raised! This was the target to provide a 'digital state-of-the-art X-ray machine'.

As well as this, the Trust would like to raise additional funds for those items which are "over and above" standard NHS issue but which will help to make anybody's time, however short or however long, in the new building an even nicer experience than it might otherwise be. These items include:

An ultra-sound scanner at a cost of approximately £40,000

16 special, electrically-operated, rise-and-fall, recliner armchairs costing £2,500 each for patients

4 basic recliner chairs @£1,000 each to enable relatives to stay overnight, and

16 Smart TV sets with Skype and Facetime facilities (free to view) @£500 each.

If villages around Brackley could each raise £500 then this would pay for all the Smart TV sets in one fell swoop.

If you can help either by organising an event, please contact Caryl via email caryl@billingham-brackley.com

or by making a donation please visit the webpage where you will find information on how to do so.
www.brackleycommunityhospital.charity/

Thank you.

May 2020 Pastoral Message from the Rector

Dear Friends, I hope you are all bearing up under the lockdown restrictions. It's hard to write about current events as they are changing almost daily, and I am writing this a couple of weeks before it is published. However, some of things we would traditionally be celebrating and enjoying together in May such as May Day celebrations will be sadly missed. There is however one celebration that will go ahead in our homes and that is the VE day celebrations.

Victory is a wonderfully uplifting word. Although it is often used in Military terms, victory is a word that can describe even the smallest triumph. Being a 'Victor' means that you have overcome something, and we all love an 'overcomer'. In our news recently we all got behind Captain Tom Moore, a War veteran from the 2nd World war, who undertook to walk 100 lengths of his back garden before his 100th birthday in order to raise a modest amount for the NHS. This is extraordinary by anyone's standards. Captain Tom has become a symbol of Victory and triumph in our nation; he has taken the enemies of old age and frailty and withstood them, defying their hold and negative effects and he has triumphed in the face of them, and brought a good deal of good from it. His example has made us all realise that, even in adversity, we can still overcome and triumph. We can all aspire to, or like Captain Tom, achieve a level of victory in our lives, but there is only one way to defeat mankind's two greatest enemies of sin and death, and that is to put your faith and trust in Jesus, who has already won the victory for us. Have a great VE day celebration, and let's look forward to our freedom and liberty from lockdown and covid-19; determined to put lessons learned into practice.

God bless you all with love Rev Sue. X

Croughton Parish Council, Chairman's Annual Report 2019/20

The Annual Parish Assembly scheduled for 27th April 2020 was cancelled due to the emerging crisis caused by the global spread of Coronavirus. For the Parish Council it had been business as usual for most of the year but in March events began to unfold that would require a different approach to the way people were to live their lives and how the Parish Council would transact its business. An Extra Ordinary Meeting scheduled for 24th March was cancelled in accordance with the Government's announcement the day before on social and physical restrictions. The Parish Council began to investigate holding virtual meetings via an online platform, and held an experimental informal meeting via Zoom on 26th March 2020. Legislation was introduced on 4th April 2020 to make provision for such arrangements until 6th May 2021.

As a result of the Coronavirus emergency, the village hall and play park were closed, the Clerk began working from home and some events, such as the WI defibrillator awareness session, and projects, such as the planned renewal by Western Power Distribution of high voltage cables throughout the village were postponed, whilst the April 2020 issue of Croughton News was published not in hard copy for delivery to every household, but in electronic form and published on the website.

A wonderful community effort, starting with offers of assistance for self-isolating residents to give them telephone support and bring them medical/other urgent supplies sprung up. Co-ordinated by Lotty Dollman, the volunteers arranged for food supplies and meals on wheels to be delivered to

people who were vulnerable and no longer able to rely on their independence.

Local elections planned for 7th May 2020 were cancelled. I along with Cllrs Davies and Tomlin, who were elected to the current Parish Council in 2015, will each have served a 6-year term of office, not the anticipated 4 year term by the time of the elections next year. The reorganisation of local government in the county has also been affected. Shadow unitary authorities will come into being on 8th May 2020 but with elections cancelled, membership of them will comprise a combination of councillors from existing district, borough and county councils.

The Council's responsibilities are to manage on behalf of the parish:

- Financial budgeting, accounting and auditing.
- Maintenance of Parish Council facilities: (bus shelter, cemetery, defibrillator, dog waste bins, footway lighting, allotments, grit bin at Portway, parish noticeboards, public benches and Portway Pocket Park)
- Provision of services through contractors : (grass cutting of designated areas, lighting for footways, dog waste collection, Newsletter and water for the allotments)
- As statutory consultee, to respond to planning applications and also to comment on wider County and District issues which may affect the village. From April 2020 such consultations are no longer being issued using paper copies, but in electronic form. In February 2020 SNC

provided the Parish Council with the necessary equipment to facilitate this new, as yet untried, method.

The Council undertakes these tasks in compliance with relevant UK legislation, Standing Orders and Financial Regulations. The Council adopts and regularly reviews its own policies to ensure good ethics and practice by the Council. The Annual Action Plan and budget set out the Council's objectives and are reviewed quarterly to ensure that actions are carried out and we remain within the agreed budget.

During the year April 2018 to March 2019 the Council has acted to address various matters, including:

Residents' road safety concerns and highway issues. We try to find solutions by working with the Highway Authority and Police to help mitigate, with mixed success, some issues such as inconsiderate parking and traffic speeds. Both the speed limits on Brackley Road, where previous attempts to create a footway stalled on grounds of cost and drainage, will be extended in an effort to reduce speed of vehicles approaching the village from the direction of the Cemetery and to improve safety around the blind bend where the road narrows near the junction with High Street.

A request for waiting restrictions to be installed between the existing white lines opposite the accesses Nos. 5 & 7 High Street was not taken up by the Highway Authority who advised the Parish Council to formally apply for double yellow lines along the north side of the carriageway instead. This application was also rejected. Following further pressure from residents and the Parish Council the Highway Authority has agreed to monitor the situation with a view to reconsidering the application later in the year.

The Parish Council is grateful to Croughton's team of Community Speed Watch volunteers led by Co-Ordinator Bill Morris for another campaign that resulted in 388 warning letters being issued to owners of vehicles recorded as travelling well over the 20mph speed limit.

Evidence of the traffic volumes and speeds was also captured by the loaned battery-charged Vehicle Activated Sign temporarily installed at the chicane by the School. Made possible by a generous donation, the Parish Council has now ordered a mobile solar powered VAS that will be moved between four sites: at Blenheim adjacent to the stream; at the chicane by the School; by Townend Close, Brackley Road; and in Portway opposite Portway Drive. Thank you to those who have offered to assist with the logistics of this operation.

Footway Lighting. We continue with ongoing repairs and necessary replacements to our ageing stock of 57 units. A New Homes Bonus grant funded the replacement of the last 3 fibreglass columns and their lanterns at a cost of £3,603. In addition, Lamps Nos 7, 50 and 44 have been replaced with LED lanterns bringing the total number of LED lanterns to 10. We thank residents for reporting lighting faults to us.

Allotments. The Council has acted on tenants' concerns regarding maintenance of the site. Clearance of weeds from one unkempt plot has enabled it to be rented out once again and brought into cultivation. We continue to monitor the condition of the wall, keep it free of ivy and ensure that there is a cut margin between it and the allotments on the south side.

Website. Since the Community Website became defunct in March 2019, the Council now operates one website only www.croughtonparishcouncil.org.uk Thank you to Jamie Bodley-Scott who served as Webmaster to the Community Website from August 2010.

Defibrillator. The four Guardians continue to carry out weekly inspections of the equipment. The importance of this

regime cannot be overestimated. Their prompt action in May 2019 in rectifying damage to the equipment ensured that it was back in service within 5 days. Guardian Penny Forbes is standing down and we would like to thank her and her colleagues for their commitment over the year.

Cemetery. We are considering planting trees or installing fencing to fill gaps in the roadside boundary in an attempt to make access more difficult for scavenger muntjacs who have a liking for floral tributes. We would like to thank one family for a donation of additional planting. Our thanks go to Mr Rob Robbins for his considerable assistance with Cemetery affairs over the year.

Budget. The Council's budget for 2019/2020 was £29,962, an increase of £13.65% on the previous budget. Electricity costs increased by 23% in January 2019 and this was factored in. The Payments budget was offset by budgeted Receipts of £3,069 and an additional £1,600 of Lighting Reserves, leaving a required Parish Precept of £25,293. The Council continues to set aside money for potential structural maintenance to the allotment wall and replacement footway lighting. Our actual spend was £29,823.00,

We are very fortunate to have several volunteers from within the village who regularly undertake specific tasks for, and/or provide feedback to, the Council on certain areas of village life including:

All Saints Church ~ Croughton News ~ Defibrillator ~ Public Footpaths ~ Neighbourhood Watch ~ Portway Pocket Park ~ Village Hall ~ Reading Room ~ Traffic Volume and Speed Data analysis.

This support is very much appreciated. Thank you to everyone.

Croughton Parish Council comprises nine elected unpaid Members and employs a part time Parish Clerk. The Council operated at full strength until April 2019 when former Chairman, Cllr Pamela Gelder resigned from office after 14 years' quality service. Cllr Morris was co-opted in October 2019 to fill the vacancy. In April this year Cllr Jean Coles, a stalwart of long service, and former Chairman, Cllr Penny Forbes resigned. My thanks and best wishes go to Pamela, Jean and Penny.

Thank you also to Cllrs Trevor Davies, Vee Griffiths, Rodger James, Bill Morris, Mike Tadman and Brian Tomlin for their support and commitment to parish affairs. If you would be interested in filling one of the 2 available seats on the Parish Council please contact either the Chairman or the Clerk to the Parish Council for more information.

Email: chairman@croughtonparishcouncil.org.uk
or clerk@croughtonparishcouncil.org.uk

Councillor Chris Fox, Chairman

Croughton Village Hall and Croughton Play Park

In line with Government restrictions imposed in response to Covid-19 Croughton Village Hall and Croughton Play Park remain CLOSED. The Village Hall Management Committee is grateful to everyone for their co-operation and understanding during this difficult time.

**Newsletter submissions by 28th of each month to:
Georgina Lucas, 50 Portway Drive, Croughton.
Tel: 01869 810923, or e-mail galucas@waitrose.com**

The Croughton Newsletter is published by the Parish Council.